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The first paper in this symposium describes some common misunderstandings between social workers and juvenile courts. In the second paper, the Judge of a Children's Court replies. A social worker's comments will appear in the October issue.

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1. SOCIAL WORK AND THE COURT IN THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN*

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WE have in our society two major organs for the protection of children, one judicial and one executive—the juvenile court and the social agency. These organs of protection developed independently. They were not originally part of an integrated plan. It becomes all the more important, therefore, that their relationships be clarified, and that their distinct functions be utilized to provide the maximum service and protection to families and children. Yet only too often there has been overlapping, usurpation of prerogative, and competition, instead of intelligent working together.

Juvenile courts, as we all know, are courts of law, and as such exist primarily for the interpretation and enforcement of law. They are, however, courts of equity, which means that they are intended to temper the strict application of the law to serve the interest of the child. Moreover, they have a historical background which has influenced their growth. They were originally the products of the idealistic (and to our minds now, paternalistic) thinking of the turn of the century—the age which produced Ford and Rowntree in industrial relations, Montessori in education, Rudyard Kipling's "white man's burden," Teddy Roosevelt, Sidney Webb, Jane Addams and Baden Powell. The original concept of the juvenile judge, and one of the reasons why he has such broadly defined powers, was that of a kindly, wise father who would prescribe for the good of children. It seems to me that that concept is one that we have outgrown. It comes from a simpler age—an age which did not dream of the actual complexity of human nature, an age in which right was right and wrong was wrong, untroubled by doubts; an age which, too, for all its liberalism, was far less concerned about the rights of our poorest citizens to live their own lives and bring up their families as they wished to do. That age saw nothing unusual in having a single person, elected by his fellow beings at one and the same time a judge, a child psychologist and a worker skilled in placing children in foster care and providing services to them. It was, in fact, almost unaware that there could be serious differences of opinion among intelligent, reasonable people as to the best plan for a child.

Conflict Between Court and Agency

With the development of professionally staffed child welfare agencies, first private and then public, there was bound to be competition at first, and jurisdictional disputes. Differences of opinion grew as the agencies developed a body of professional knowledge. The wide interpretation given the concept of equity robbed the court of its distinctive features as an instrument of law, and, instead of each defining its own function, court and agency were inclined to try to neutralize or to manage each other. Courts, with their legal authority, often did this by holding fast to child-care programs which could short-cut nonjudicial ones, or by making their orders so specific as to control agency programs. Agencies shied from making use of the court at all, and substituted for judicial authority the authority of persuasion and "casework" used as a transitive verb. I think we all remember the days of "anything for a voluntary placement," however involuntary it was, and the way in which social workers decided that Mrs. Jones' home wasn't a good one for Jimmy and he shouldn't return to it. Agencies also agitated for the social worker-judge, and considered a judge good, not if he interpreted the law and the con-

*From a paper presented at Southern Regional Conference, Montgomery, Alabama, February, 1949.

flicting adjudication of human rights according to the ethics of his profession, but only if he did what social workers wanted him to do.

Naturally, we, as social workers, have seen the problem largely from our own point of view. Generally we have been willing, in our social work councils, to concede that the court has jurisdiction in such matters as determination of custody and the use of authority when our work with the parents has not succeeded in protecting the child. At the same time, we have insisted, rightly, that the whole area of service and placement should be in our hands. And in some communities, where the judge has been impressed with the skills we can offer, or where the court has neither the money nor the staff to provide services, this broad distinction of function has indeed come about. In others, it is worlds away, and in many communities it can easily be upset at any time by the election of what we think of as a "socially uneducated" judge.

We come here, I think, to the crux of the matter —that what we have accomplished isn't a true distinction of function based on the proper contribution of the judicial and the executive, of the law and social work, to the welfare of society, but rather a delegation of certain parts of the court's existing authority to organizations outside the court. The court has the whole responsibility. It is both judicial and executive. The judge is, by statute, both judge and a (usually) somewhat untutored social worker, with the authority of a judge and few if any of the limits to his personal discretion that normally limit and guide a judge. He has, in fact, the responsibility of a practitioner in both fields, and is subject to the discipline of neither.

This fact, it seems to me, has tremendous implications, not only for any real distinction of function and real partnership between the court and the social agency, but for the entire structure of a democratic society. It calls for a re-examination of the entire role of courts in the protection of children, and of their relationship to social work.

Before we go any further, let us lay the "equity" ghost. Juvenile courts, we have all heard said, are courts of equity, not of law. But there is no dichotomy between equity and law. Equity is law tempered to the needs of the disadvantaged. The Lord Chancellor of England, to whom alone, at first, was entrusted this tremendous responsibility, was no less a lawyer when he sat in a court of equity. Nor was he guided simply by what he thought best, but by the strict law of man as it might need to be modified in accordance with the principles of a more universal justice; or, if one likes, the law of God— in which he was in fact adept, being lawyer and churchman both. There was no intention that he should disregard the law or not be bound by its general principles. Equity has too easily been confused in our minds with a personal discretion to do whatever seems best at the moment; and we, as a profession, in our eagerness to individualize each situation, have contributed to the idea, although in our own practice we are beginning to value a flexible framework of policy within the limits of which individual differences can be handled.

What Is the Court's Function?

We need, I think, to ask ourselves three closely related questions with regard to the law:

1. Do we see the law as primarily punitive or protective?
2. Is there a specific contribution to the welfare of children and their parents that springs from legal training and discipline?
3. Is there a place for court action in the protection of children other than in extreme cases, or to enforce the demands of the community when voluntary methods have failed?

The first question really controls the others. The only answer I can give is that the law is primarily the means whereby, in a democratic community, human rights are protected and an adjudication is made between the sometimes conflicting rights of individuals. Law is a system offering protection against the irresponsible actions of individuals and against the assumption of arbitrary powers on the part of those who govern. It is true that the law becomes sometimes overtechnical and overelaborate, and can be used to defeat its own objectives, just as social work can become overtechnical and overelaborate and can be used to defeat its own objectives. The law, however, still remains the only democratic way by which decisions are made that vitally affect the basic human rights of people. The very elaborations and delays of which we complain, are primarily devices designed to attain that end. The rules of evidence, for instance, which we have somewhat blithely discarded in our juvenile courts, are primarily protections against the introduction of prejudiced and unsubstantiated information into a court of law.

The law, too, has a second function: that of confirming as equitable and lending dignity to a personal transaction. I think that in the adoptive field we have recognized this function as an extremely valuable one in emphasizing the importance of what has happened.

In these two aspects, it seems to me, lies the proper judicial function: to act as a system of checks and balances within the framework of the law (including therein equity) on the plans that the community may develop for its children, to adjudicate human rights when the rights of a child may be in conflict with those

of his parents, to sanction and add dignity to personal transactions such as, possibly, surrender, adoption, and voluntary transfer of custody. It is no part of judicial authority to carry out or control the actual care of children, any more than it is a social work function to determine that such-and-such a parent is unfit to care for his children, or should not be permitted to take some proposed action affecting his children's rights.

In other words, the two disciplines are needed both to supplement and to act as a check on the other wherever human rights are at stake, and this is impossible where the exercise of both is vested in one person, or where one can control the other. It should not rest with the court to say both, "This is best for Johnny," and, "This shall be done"; but rather, that the social plan which has been arrived at for Johnny shall be carried out because in the court's judgment it is, first, necessary to protect his rights, and secondly, does not involve unwarrantable interference with the normal prerogatives that his parents have as his parents. The court should, in fact, adjudicate between Johnny's rights as expressed by those who believe that he needs protection, and the rights of his parents to normal discretion in bringing up their child. The court should be a court, and, although to exercise such equity a judge must be both a wise and understanding man and a skilled lawyer, he should not be called upon to be also a child-expert. In fact, the "child-expert" judge who is fortified with undisciplined theory is far more dangerous than the one who recognizes what he does not know. The judge does need to be an expert, on the other hand, in the evaluation of the rights of conflicting parties, and in being sure that all sides of a question have been thoroughly discussed. This is primarily the legal skill.

Criticisms and Recommendations

It is a sad fact that in our democratic society and with our ardent belief in the rights of individuals, we have, in most of our juvenile courts, a paternalistic, although, of course, often a beneficent dictatorship, in which decisions are made according to the personal opinion of one man alone. He may, of course, listen to social work advice. He may make his decisions in accordance with equity. But all too often, and especially where he feels that he is in some sense an expert, the decisions that he makes are the result of his personal make-up and of the "slant" that he has on life. He has neither the help of a jury nor, in most cases, an attorney, to act as a brake and correct the "slant." (And I would like to make clear that it is not the judge's fault, except inasmuch as he is, like all of us, human and has, like all of us, "slants," blind spots, areas of overprotection or lack of understanding, which, though in themselves are not too serious, are serious when they become the law.) Even appeal from his judgment is beyond the reach of most of the parents who come before a juvenile court. If proof is needed of the fact that something is wrong in the set up, consider what happens when the child of a well-to-do person comes before a juvenile court. The court changes its whole character and becomes, in fact, a court.

I think this ought to concern us deeply. I do not want to go back to formal, public, court hearings, with all their attendant evils. I do think, however, that we need to make sure that our courts are actually courts of justice and that every side to a question is thoroughly discussed. Nor do I believe, myself, that we can leave the checks and balances on the judge's discretion to social workers. Social workers are, it is true, trained to be objective. They can, in many cases, help a parent decide for himself on an acceptable plan. It is, I think, their function to present to the court the plans they believe would ensure the child's right. But social workers, and, in particular, child welfare workers, have their function as advocates for the child, and are, moreover, not an official part of the court. Social workers have their place as experts in the field and, as such, are advisers to the court; but the basis of their opinions has not as yet the general currency that would give it status as a democratic standard by which the rights of an individual could or should be determined.

I do not believe that we could at this time "blueprint" with any conviction the kind of juvenile court that would both be democratic and employ to the full the specific contributions of the law and of social work. However, the court that we might envisage as bringing to children and to parents the full protection of the law and of acceptable child-care standards might have some of these characteristics:

1. Statutory referral to a social agency, first, for screening, and then, if necessary, for the development of what we might call "the community's plan," which might or might not be fully accepted by the parents, but which, if it involved care of the child outside the home, would need court sanction.

2. The presence in the court of a legal "next friend" or curator-ad-hoc, whose job would be not to take part in judgment, but to be sure that all sides of the question have been presented and that the judge's decision does not overstep the limits of reasonable discretion. This should include the right of appeal when there is any question of the rights of parents being unnecessarily infringed.

3. Consideration of the agency plan in terms of the evidence and principles of equity.

4. Either approval or rejection of the agency plan.

5. Reopening of the case on the request of either the parents or the agency, with similar procedure, but not continuing responsibility unless this is done.

Some of these suggestions may be a little shocking to those who are apt to use the term "legalistic" to describe any attempt to set limits on discretion in the field of child protection. Yet it is through these checks and balances that democracy exists. Just as the Bar Association in our state objected to a law permitting a judge to place a child for adoption on the grounds that insufficient checks and balances were involved in having him pass on his own adoption, so I think that legal discipline and tradition have a reviewing function in respect to social plans when basic rights are involved. We, as a social work group, have been inclined to depreciate what the legal profession can give us, just as much as the reverse. We should not be afraid of acting within a legal framework and submitting our judgments to a democratic review, if we can do so as participants making our contribution on a full professional basis and not as an eternal suppliant for a responsibility which is rightfully ours.

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2. CHILDREN'S COURTS, AN EFFECTIVE AID TO SOCIAL AGENCIES

Victor B. Wylegala

Judge, Erie County Children's Court, Buffalo, N. Y.

THE modern children's or juvenile court is a natural and logical complement of the new attitude and development of social work philosophy and practices. We no longer are satisfied to practice charity to the indigent and needy through "poor" laws in poorhouses or orphanages or by just giving cash for relief, but with improved social welfare laws we seek to apply social casework principles by trained social workers to help the individual learn how to help himself.

Changes in social thinking also included judges throughout the country who became discouraged with the futility of administering punishment to children charged with crimes under the criminal laws. The child was recognized as a product of unfavorable factors and of the failure of our social structure, rather than a criminal fully accountable for his acts. To punish such a child was recognized as cruel and ineffective, and various ideas of corrective social treatment were advanced.

The Development of Juvenile Courts

Although the first act authorizing separate trials and procedures for children accused of crimes was passed in the state of Illinois fifty years ago, the modern juvenile court is a much younger institution. It took the state of Wyoming 45 of those 50 years to pass a juvenile court law and to make true the statement that now every state has some type of law for dealing with juvenile delinquency.

The early laws followed no pattern, were limited to juvenile delinquency, and mostly were appended to already complicated court systems. This condition still prevails to a large extent. Except for a few states like Rhode Island and Connecticut, where full-time juvenile court judges serve all sections of the state, and some of the larger counties where judges serve exclusively juvenile courts, matters concerning children are handled by judges presiding also over courts whose main occupation is hearing probate, divorce, civil or criminal matters. Juvenile cases are squeezed into crowded calendars and dispatched as quickly as the small additional salary (as little as $500.00 per year), seems to warrant.

In the early 1920's, through the leadership of the National Probation Association, a model Juvenile Court Act was prepared, extending the powers of juvenile courts beyond juvenile delinquency to include practically all phases of the child's life during minority. Many states have adopted its philosophy at least in part.

While the laws of no two states are alike, and while there are differences in laws governing courts in different sections of the same state, many critics of the juvenile courts use the word "court" as being the same everywhere. They forget that courts are not self-made or self-ruled entities which can readily accommodate themselves to the wishes or desires of individuals or groups. Courts must be measured or appraised in terms of performance under the laws creating them, and not according to standards advocated for them by experts. White House Conferences are useful in developing thought for improving procedures, legislation, etc.—but advancing a principle does not mean that courts can follow it before their laws are amended to conform.

I cannot help but mention another fault of some critics, and that is: generalizing in their condemnation of all juvenile courts on the basis of performance of the weaker ones. I make no claim that all courts

having jurisdiction in children's matters are functioning properly. But I do maintain that there are many courts in our country doing effective jobs within their sphere of activity.

It has been my happy privilege in the past twelve years of my judgeship to become personally acquainted with not only the judges of my own state of New York, but also with many from other states. I can and do say without reservation that every one of them is most eager to serve his community in accord with the spirit and philosophy underlying the modern juvenile court, but that in too many cases their powers are so limited by their laws or by the resources of their communities that the modern improved social techniques are not available to them.

It may be well, too, at this point to mention that while there are differences in procedures in many courts, the differences really are largely in form rather than in substance; and perhaps also to remind the reader, as well as the critic, that there are many communities that have no trained social workers in either public or private agencies, not to mention the practical impossibility of finding psychiatrists to give the court advice in that field.

What is the reason for this confusion? Need it exist? What, if any, is the remedy?

The answer to these questions lies in a better understanding of the relationship between the court and the agencies with which it works, and the manner in which the job must be done, and then providing social agencies with trained social workers who will know how and when to use the court and how to provide the resources to accomplish what the court orders.

Areas of Responsibility

In the American concept of individual rights, we must include the child as having certain, definite inalienable rights which are inherent in him as a person, and are not dependent on the whims or desires of parents or guardians, or on a benevolent or paternalistic state. These rights come from his Creator, as clearly stated in the Declaration of Independence.

> Every child has the inalienable right: first, to good physical development of his body, the correction of faults or handicaps caused by heredity, disease or accident; second, to mental development or training in the use of his intelligence to the highest point of his ability; and third, to moral and spiritual development for service to his God, his country and his fellowmen. More briefly—with apologies to the framers of the Scout Oath—every child has the inalienable right to grow up physically strong, mentally alert and morally straight.

Over the years, as our society grew more complex, it became evident that it could not be regulated by force of law alone. Numerous agencies were organized to assist the individuals, as well as the family, in learning how to conform to society's laws and how better to enjoy the benefits and fruits of civilized living. Charity, one of the Christian virtues, has inspired the foundation of various agencies which with experience developed the modern social casework techniques. In America, following the principle that social work is most effective when done on a voluntary basis, two types of social agencies were developed, the private and the public.

The private social agency serving in a field selected by itself is limited only by its charter or certificate of incorporation. It serves, for as long as it wishes, those whom it selects from willing applicants. In other words, the service is voluntary on both the agency's and the client's part. The limits of the service are controlled by its resources.

The public agency serves in a field prescribed and limited by law. It must serve all who apply and who qualify for its service, as long as they wish to be served. In other words, the service is voluntary only on the part of the client. He must get the service as long as he qualifies and wants it; provided, of course, that appropriations make funds available.

The failure and expense of penal institutions to achieve results in stopping crime led to the establishment of a separate class of public agencies: parole and probation. In their casework they resemble social agencies, but their field of work as well as their clients are limited by the law, the court and the parole boards.

Because the children's or juvenile court deals largely with social problems it is frequently called a social agency, but it differs materially from the private or public social agency. In the first place, there is nothing voluntary about it. The client seldom is willing to concede the need of its services. He must be brought in by legal process. When properly before it, the court must hear and determine the issues involved within the powers and limits prescribed by law. The client must accept and conform to the judgment of the court for as long as the court continues its jurisdiction. The law setting up the court prescribes the subject matter that may be judged, the procedure (not always clearly) to be followed, as well as the powers of the court. The client, if dissatisfied with the decision or disposition, may, under simple and inexpensive proceedings, have the case reviewed by an appellate court.

The private and public agencies, generally, are set up to render all the service needed within their field. The court, on the other hand, not being functional, must depend entirely on other agencies to provide the prescribed services. Except for such supervision in

the child's home as it is able to provide through a Probation Service (which, by the way, is frequently not under the court's direction, but is rendered through a juvenile division of a Probation Department) the court depends entirely on the social agencies of the community. No juvenile court can be better than the agencies which furnish the cases, facts and information on which it bases its judgment or to which it entrusts the execution of its orders.

The court can compel parents to do things against their will. It can impose conditions under which parents may retain custody and control of their children. It can remove children from the homes of their parents; it may order medical, surgical and educational services for the children over parental objection or against the wishes of the child; and it can compel parents to pay for the services to the limit of their ability. None of these services are performed by the court but by some other agency.

It seems entirely fitting, in view of our American philosophy of personal rights and freedom, that an agency possessing such broad powers should have legal or technical restrictions on their use. Until such time as we develop a sort of superman who will be a good lawyer, an expert caseworker, psychologist, psychiatrist, superintendent of a training school, and a wise parent, judges will need curbs on their powers. But should such an all-around expert be found, I doubt very much that he could be induced to become a juvenile court judge.

Juvenile court procedures need not be overly technical nor legalistic. Personally, I believe there is a sound and fair middle course between the extremely socialized and the legalistic procedures, which can assure to every individual before the court the protection of his every right. Surely, as long as the individual is not to be treated as a criminal, even when he commits serious criminal acts, he should be required to waive some of the technicalities and red tape of the criminal laws to assist in speeding his rehabilitation.

Integration of Efforts in Behalf of Children

In my own court, any properly trained social worker need have no fear of the lawyer who may occasionally appear for the child or his parents if the preliminary work was well done. The fact is that each year the number of contested cases is decreasing. We may be more fortunate than other communities in our relationship with social agencies and with the bar, but there is nothing we do that cannot be done elsewhere.

A brief quotation from the opinion in a case erroneously entitled *Peo. vs. Lewis* (260 N.Y. 171) in New York State's highest court, the Court of Appeals, summarizes the legal and social sides of the children's court.

"In the administration of children's courts there is evidence of a tendency to confuse the procedure usual in mere dependency cases with that necessary in delinquency cases involving an issue of fact. To serve the social purpose for which the children's court was created, provision is made in the statute for wide investigation before, during and after the hearing. But that investigation is clinical in its nature. Its results are not to be used as legal evidence where there is an issue of fact to be tried. When it is said that even in cases of lawbreaking delinquency constitutional safeguards and the technical procedure of the criminal law may be disregarded, there is no implication that a purely socialized trial of a specific issue may properly or legally be had. The contrary is true. There must be a reasonably definite charge. The customary rules of evidence shown by long experience as essential to getting at the truth with reasonable certainty in civil trials must be adhered to. The finding of fact must rest on the preponderance of evidence adduced under those rules. Hearsay, opinion, gossip, bias, prejudice, trends of hostile neighborhood feeling, the hopes and fears of social workers, are all sources of error and have no more place in children's courts than in any other court."

The New York State Children's Court Act follows closely the earliest of the Model Juvenile Court Acts proposed by the N.P.A. While it could stand some modernization, especially since there was no actual operating experience when the law was passed, the children's courts of New York State are giving effective aid to social agencies in their work. We have no magic, no panacea, no pills or drugs to cure the ills of our clients. All we can do is to compel the client to accept and to submit to the advice or corrective processes that our authorized social agencies, supported by private or public funds, have to offer.

The court decides questions of fact on evidence supplied by trained social workers, and then prescribes recommended treatment which it believes will best accomplish its purpose of conserving the welfare of the child. How well the court does its work, of course, depends to a great extent upon the judge, but much more on the information concerning the habits, surroundings, conditions, needs and tendencies of the child, supplied by the investigating social agencies. These may be probation officers or social workers, assisted in all cases by reports of school authorities, doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists.

Judges come and go—depending on the swing of the ballot box or the whim of the appointing power, but social agencies continue. The attitude of judges toward social agencies, and *vice versa*, is influenced most by mutual understanding, respect, and the quality of the service rendered.

We may be improving in our work, but we are far from perfect. There are still many evidences of failure of the American home and community to eradicate juvenile delinquency, crime and other social evils. We must continue our efforts, we must learn to co-operate

even better. We must see to it that all communities have good juvenile courts, proper judges to head them, and trained social workers to serve them. A better, more law-abiding citizenship can result only from better co-ordination of the efforts of parents, schools, churches, social agencies and the community. We must learn and understand each other's powers, weaknesses and limitations as well as resources, skills and abilities.

I want social agencies to continue operating in the truly American way on a voluntary basis between client and agency, but when the occasion calls for it, they should make use of the authority and power of the children's or juvenile court, to compel the protection of every child's American heritage.

The project is a tremendous one. There is opportunity for all willing to contribute to a better way of life and there is glory enough for all who succeed.

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THE PLACEMENT OF YOUNG INFANTS FOR ADOPTION

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With what safeguards can adoption of very young infants be surrounded? Are pediatrics and psychiatry advanced enough to support casework in the selective placement of infants under three months of age? This article raises these and other pertinent questions.

IT has been said frequently that too little is known about adoption. There is a dearth of information about the outcome of adoptive placement which ultimately and definitively terminates in the legal creation of a relationship of parent to child. For the child and his new parents, this termination is only the beginning. What happens to the relationship beyond this termination and this beginning is not known generally. Thus a grave responsibility devolves upon the adoption agency for skillful performance and clear understanding of the parent-child relationship during this known period.

The implications involved in determining that a child is adoptable, and in selecting adoptive parents for an individual baby, have created restrictions. Sometimes agencies have not been able to correlate their responsibility, and these restrictions, with the needs of children deprived of their natural parents, and, therefore, have been unable to move numbers of children into adoption with ease. Adoptive parents may make their choice, when the time comes, in relation to a child presented for their consideration, while the agency must always speak for the child. Only as agencies have achieved understanding of their role in meeting the child's needs, has adoption practice made advances. The consciences of many agencies have been stirred by children who have waited too long for adoptive homes. As agencies have examined their practice, they have gained this understanding.

Since caution with dispatch is needed in adoptive placements, the agency must decide which children need early placement, and which need a longer period of study, and must act accordingly. There is a home for every child who can use one, even though the search for special children takes time and effort. It is, therefore, economical to place each infant as early as is reasonably possible, and thus to conserve time for the child who may not be able to use early adoption placement.

Since the beginning of 1945, the Catholic Home Bureau has been examining the results of early placements on a selective basis. By early placement is meant the placement of babies under three months of age. These infants are placed before it is possible to give a developmental test, so that the actual completion of the study of the child takes place in the adoptive home.

Although the plan has produced satisfactory results in the past three and a half years, it is tentative and subject to continued scrutiny. There have been some changes in the original plan which have come about through the evaluation of each placement. New criteria and new procedures have been developed as situations and circumstances have demanded. Individual placements which have proved unsatisfactory have been carefully analyzed to determine the contributing factors, and an effort has been made to avoid these factors in subsequent placements.

The Benefits of Early Placements

Such placements have been accomplished on a selective basis, since not every young infant on referral for adoption is one who can use a home at this early age. The agency has assumed the responsibility for making the choice of infants for this program after it has studied and related the social and hereditary backgrounds and the medical findings. An infant placed as early as this is one who gives every indica-

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Now Is the Time

AS I climbed into my plane to leave the National Conference in Cleveland, I found myself thinking that something had been left out—that somewhere along the line the Conference seemed to fall just short of providing the kind of inspiration and the raising of sights which the word "Conference" means to so many of us. Perhaps this feeling was the result of the heavy blanket of heat which descended on Cleveland; but I suspect it is more likely that the Conference overtones reflected less the temperature, than a general anxiety in which both social workers and laymen alike seem to be caught.

I wondered whether others had sensed the same questioning mood on the part of the conferees—the lack of the crusading spirit with which we have carried our convictions into action in the past.

The Child Welfare League sessions were unusually well attended, and interest was keen, although throughout the Conference there appeared to be far greater interest in techniques and practice than in broad principles and goals. To our encouragement, we saw an unusual attendance on the part of Board Members, aware of specific child welfare problems, and wanting to know what they as trustees could do about them. In greater numbers than ever before, both professional staff members and laymen visited the League booth asking for consultation about agency and community problems.

Remembering these facts, I wondered whether what appears to be a lack of conviction on the part of social workers is merely a questioning as to what *method* will carry out the convictions on which our work is founded. Is it not, partly, that we distrust some of the superficial solutions offered today to meet over-complex problems? For example, we are all aware that no single blueprint will answer the problem of the division of public and private agency responsibility, for each community and state must be considered as a separate entity. The same can be said of the recent tendency to answer community problems of social service coverage through manipulation of agency structures.

Child welfare, like all social work, has grounds for wholehearted belief in the principles it has developed during the past ten years. Real methods for carrying out principles have been developed, improved, and given validity in practice.

I wondered whether we are not allowing pessimism over national and world problems (and they are very real ones) to obscure the knowledge that, at the core, child welfare has made effective progress. It should not be news that the problems of children are rooted in the problems of society. Our very awareness of this truth makes it impossible for social workers "to say nothing, to venture nothing, and to wait." This is not our professional heritage.

As an example of "making a stand," most of us could take a page from the history which was recently made in Massachusetts, when Miriam Van Waters successfully defined the basic idea of social welfare as it applies to penal institutions. By placing squarely before the public the issues at stake, Dr. Van Waters found a not only sympathetic, but vigilant community rallying to support her position.

Furthermore, there can be no basis for fear that the public will not support good child welfare services, when, in community after community where child welfare workers have taken their problems fully and squarely to the public, the public has responded and has met the challenge. But for some reason we have been satisfied to allow public misconceptions of what child welfare services require in the way of financial support, and have thus done a disservice not only to the children we serve, but to the public itself.

Contributions to social services are greater than they have ever been at any time, but the giving public is demanding proof of need and evidence of result. Child welfare, which everyone recognizes as vital, is served by a profession that does have knowledge of need, sound ways of meeting it, and innumerable examples of effectiveness.

The child welfare field must present the total picture of children's needs to the public enthusiastically, backed by our knowledge of all that is required and all it will cost, however radical that may be.

SPENCER H. CROOKES

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New Members

Sheltering Arms Association of Day Nurseries
214 Baker Street, N. W.
Atlanta, Georgia
Miss Frances Mason, Executive Director

House of the Good Shepherd
1700 Genesee Street, Zone 4
Utica, New York
Deaconess Hilda L. Dieterly, Superintendent

New Provisionals

Children's Aid Society of Indiana, Inc.
1411 Lincoln Way West
Mishawaka, Indiana
Mr. Anton J. Vlcek, Executive Director

Lutheran Welfare Society of Iowa
423 Grand Avenue
Des Moines 9, Iowa
Mr. George Westby, Executive Director

Jewish Child Care Association of Essex County
15 Lincoln Park
Newark 2, New Jersey
Mr. Jacob L. Trobe, Executive Director

Community Service Society
70 West Chippewa Street
Buffalo 2, New York
Mr. Milton Goldman, Executive Director

Lutheran Welfare Service of Northwestern Ohio
210 Summit Street
Toledo 4, Ohio
Reverend Otto H. Dagefoerde, Executive Director

A BOARD MEMBER SPEAKS ON

*Methods of Promoting Better Understanding of Child Welfare Services**

DOWN through the years, the administrators of welfare agencies have adopted several vital principles. Without endeavoring to enumerate all of these principles, I should like to call attention to three that are particularly important. They are:

1. That welfare services are to be performed no longer by the well-meaning amateur, but require professionally trained, skilled workers.
2. That welfare services must be operated by practices as efficient as those employed in the fields of business, finance and industry.
3. That welfare agencies are no longer limited to dispensing charity, but are responsible for providing services to all levels of the community.

The Public Must Know the Agency

Now we find that welfare agencies have adopted—or at least it is high time that they adopt—still another principle or point of view. It can be called a *public relations point of view* . . . a philosophy of management, as it were. The agency with such a viewpoint realizes:

1. That social work has become such a complex and expensive business that it can no longer perform in an ivory tower.
2. That we work under the increasingly critical eye of a vigilant public . . . and the bigger we grow, the more critical and alert this eye becomes.
3. That it is important to discover what the community thinks about us; what the community knows, what it misunderstands, what it does not know.
4. That we must subject ourselves to continuous self-examination—*from the public's point of view*—not merely an examination to convince *ourselves* that our professional standards are satisfactory.

This point of view—which I have referred to as the *public relations point of view*—is the one we have come here to consider. On the Conference program it is called, "Methods of Promoting Better Understanding of Child Welfare Services," with a subtitle, "Ways and Means of Promoting Better Understanding on the Part of the General Public Regarding Child Welfare Services."

Who—or what—is the "general public"? Some authorities in the field of public relations assert that we should keep in mind the existence of *many* publics. In the field of child welfare we can break down our publics into:

Staff of the agency; boards of trustees; adopting parents; foster (or boarding) parents; contributors—and prospects; staffs of co-operating agencies; members of the medical profession, lawyers, teachers, ministers; tradesmen with whom we do business; neighbors of our offices and institutions; the reading public; the radio-listening public; and so on. Together, these publics become the general public, and it is our responsibility to see to it that each segment is dealt with in the most effective manner possible.

When a child welfare agency recognizes the need for promoting better understanding of its services and dedicates itself to that task, there are certain activities and considerations upon which it must enter. First, it is important that the agency make certain that it is doing a good job and meeting a genuine need. At the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society we maintain a collection of brief reports on closed cases, to examine what happens to our children when they grow up and get jobs and marry and take their places in the community. We turn the spotlight on those cases that end in the Women's Prison, in the State School for Boys or in the State Hospital in the hope of learning what was right and what was wrong with our work. Where did we make mistakes? What must we do to avoid such mistakes in the future?

This self-examination was developed further two months ago at our annual staff meeting. This year the staff program committee decided upon a program built around the general subject of public relations. Several weeks before the meeting, questionnaires were distributed, and each staff member was asked to submit in writing his own ideas regarding public relations of the agency; to cite specific examples of good and bad public relations; to record personal experiences that would reveal how he had handled, personally, public relations problems—pointing out errors as well as successes. These papers were read and classified by the committee, and certain individuals were asked to be prepared to participate in the meeting discussion. The meeting took the form of a panel discussion, with the program chairman presiding. There were also spontaneous, unrehearsed, and lively contributions from other staff members.

When the meeting was brought to a close before three fourths of the material had been covered, by popular demand the remainder of the material was scheduled to be presented at a subsequent monthly staff meeting. This procedure is one way of bringing about self-examination. There are probably other

* Delivered at Ohio Valley Conference, Child Welfare League of America, March 19, 1949.

means of self-study by an agency that are equally effective.

Next is a consideration of relations between administration and staff—strictly "within the family." You cannot make a favorable impression on the public if your house is not in order. The executive must be concerned about all those matters that affect the morale of the staff. For example, how about salary scales? How do they compare with those of other agencies in the community, with those of business and industry? What about indoctrination of new staff members? It is highly recommended that once each month the executive sit down with new professional staff members in one session and with new clerical staff in another, and talk about the agency. Talk about its origin, its history, its philosophy, its ideals, its objectives. Who are the board members and what do board members do; what is the budget, where does the money come from? What about hospitalization insurance, retirement, vacations, sick leave, personnel practices in general. Talk about the importance of good telephone deportment, of answering correspondence promptly, of neat letters and accurate filing; and many other things. But of great importance, tell them where your office is—and that you want them to bring to you any problem with which you can be helpful. And if you tell them this—*mean* it!

Now, let us assume that we have accomplished the first two steps: we have examined our product and found it good. We have assured ourselves that the entire staff feels itself to be a part of our agency and responsible for its good work.

Channels of Interpretation

Are we ready now to promote better understanding on the part of the general public concerning child welfare services? No, not yet. Not until we have discovered the most effective media, the most available channels for carrying this understanding. Now, I think we are agreed that we want to use the press and the radio—and some of us are exploring the use of television. We all use publications and burn the midnight oil in our efforts to secure the best copy and select the best mailing lists. We have speakers' bureaus whose members cover every assignment with eloquence. And still—in spite of miles of newspaper columns and hours of radio time—the public does not understand. We are amazed to hear the questions: "Are you tax-supported?" (if you're a private agency). "Why aren't these children all adopted?" (if you operate a boarding home program). "What's all this about psychological testing and matching?" "Some friends of ours got a baby right from a doctor —what's wrong with that?"

In my brief experience in the child welfare field, I have learned what you probably have known for years—that there is no substitute for the *personal approach* to public understanding.

How best to accomplish this personal approach? We have ready-made organizations to do this job in the form of the boards of private agencies. Will it secure the same results for the Judge of the Juvenile Court, or the doctor, to read an article or listen to a broadcast on adoptions, that can be achieved by Mr. and Mrs. Board Member who play bridge with him every Thursday night? And isn't Mr. Senator, who needs some guidance on child welfare legislation, much more likely to listen to Mr. Board Member, than he is to read and digest the most carefully prepared letter from a member of the paid staff? If we are to use this valuable medium of promoting better understanding to the greatest advantage, does it not follow that we must give attention to *informing* the board member, so that he will be prepared to represent the agency wherever he may be?

This process is not accomplished overnight. It is a continuing thing. I have thought of it as a chain reaction: a staff that can interpret to the board, who can interpret to key people in the professions and in the community, who, in turn, can inform their friends, neighbors and associates.

How is the chain reaction set up? One way is through careful planning of monthly board meetings. Perhaps here in the Ohio Valley, you have no dry board meetings; but out our way I have looked in on a few in which the agenda consisted of lunch, report of the executive, report of the treasurer, viewing with alarm, and a motion to adjourn. Can that type of meeting serve as a basis for promoting better public understanding?

Then there is the other type. Reports are brief and to the point—usually presented during dessert. And the feature of the meeting is a presentation that will inform the board. At one such meeting the speaker was the Judge of the Juvenile Court, who explained the interrelationships of the Court and the children's agencies. At another a staff psychiatrist gave a down-to-earth talk about the need for and the accomplishments of psychiatric treatment of emotionally disturbed children. And, by the way, the doctor talked about bed-wetting—not enuresis; she came right out and said that a child was so mixed up he wanted to stay with his mother and at the same time wanted to stay at the institution—she did not say he was ambivalent. And when she told about the lad whose teeth had been kicked out by his ever-loving father—she did not say the experience was traumatizing.

I have learned that board members are not enthusiastic about presentations of a highly technical nature. They can understand—and remember and

retell—actual case stories. But they will not appreciate a 40-minute lecture on, say, "Trends in Casework Skills"—heaven forbid!

If I may be permitted to recite more personal experiences: Last fall I attended meetings of several of our down-state boards. I had prepared a pretty pat speech about the agency, its ideals, its objectives and so on. I tried it out on the first two and received some perfunctory handshakes and several cups of harmless punch for my effort. Then—for some reason—I threw away my notes and got up and told a board a few honest-to-goodness case stories. When the meeting was over, one gentleman rushed up and grabbed my hand and said, "By George, that's the kind of stuff I can understand! *Now* I know what we do for these kids!" Just as an aside—he went back to a prospective donor, who had been giving him the run-around, told him the same stories and secured a substantial gift!

So, it is important to carry on this continuing type of board education. Do not assume that the members are well informed about child care. There is still much for them to learn, and when they have learned it—start the process all over again.

Most agencies have case committees. What is their function? To advise the staff on the more difficult cases? I think not. I think their function is to learn—to learn firsthand from caseworkers—what the agency is doing, how it is doing it and why it is doing it that way. Here again is the chain reaction of information . . . from staff to case committee to the board, which carries as a major function interpretation of the agency services to the public. Let us not fail to use this all-important medium of public information.

The Annual Meeting presents another opportunity for promoting public understanding. Like the monthly board meeting it can be devoted to facts and figures and dry reports. Or it can be the occasion for bringing into the community a refreshing view of our services. Such meetings can be of tremendous value to the agency. To them will come community leaders from other fields. And, in addition, the press welcomes an opportunity to pick up some quotations that are somewhat different from the strictly professional dissertations.

Finally, let us examine the most obvious—the omnipresent vehicle of public information—the printed word. I have touched on this subject earlier, but it is important enough to warrant some expansion.

There is the periodical. Judging from the number of publications of children's agencies that reach my desk, I gather that we all publish a periodical bulletin. What should these publications contain to be of greatest value? I notice that some stress the need for money—a subject that is very near to my heart. But, after all, if we tell our story convincingly enough, will not our readers respond more generously than they do when we ask for money without telling our story?

In the society's publication, a quarterly called *Homelife for Children*, we have been trying to promote better understanding through feature articles prepared by specialists on our staff. In the current issue, for example, there is an article by our Educational Therapist. In editing this article we attempted to eliminate as many of the strictly professional terms as possible—to present it in lay language. Our constituents need to know that child welfare calls for more than board and room, that some of our youngsters need special treatment and that we are doing our best to give them what they need.

What about direct mail? A couple of weeks ago it was my good fortune to attend a three-session conference on this subject, led by Mr. K. Kenneth-Smith, Executive Secretary, the Greer School, New York City. Mr. Kenneth-Smith's presentations were down to earth, packed with common sense. He caused me to resolve to turn the spotlight on our own direct mail program to discover whether we are not violating the most elementary rules in this important operation. I believe that all of us need to take great care—to take nothing for granted—in the direct mail programs of our agencies.

This whole subject of promoting better public understanding seems to have no limits. But since we cannot go on indefinitely, here are the principal factors that deserve consideration in developing better understanding of child welfare services:

1. A careful examination of the work we do.
2. Establishment of the best possible staff relations.
3. A continuous program of informing the board.
4. Special assignments for individual board members in the interpretation process.
5. Perpetual scrutiny of the publicity program.

Which of these factors is most important? They are *all* important! Perhaps you have heard of the neophyte at the race track who faced the problem of which horse was most important. He met the problem by going to the windows and placing a bet on each horse to win. Then he returned to the stands, and as the horses got away, yelled, "Come on, Somethin'."

In our efforts to bring about better public understanding of child welfare services, we would be unwise to bet all our money on one horse. Rather, we must stress all phases of our public information program. We must bet on every phase of this program. And in so doing, know that "Somethin'" is going to win!

J. D. Benefiel
General Director
Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society
Chicago, Illinois

THE PLACEMENT OF YOUNG INFANTS FOR ADOPTION

(*Continued from page 9*)

tion that he has, at this age, potentialities for development.

Adoption comes closest to the normal of all types of child placement. When an infant is placed in the early months of his life, the parent-child relationship, although artificially created, acquires the qualities associated with biologic parenthood. Thus mother love takes root early and deepens in the baby's need for the mother, with a satisfaction derived by both from their common need for each other. The adoptive parents, as well as the infant, respond to this relationship as they participate in the new experience of achieving parenthood by adoption. The infant, desired by both parents, becomes the possession of both. This does not mean that adoptive parents will love less the child who is placed with them at an older age, but here there is lacking that unique advantage stimulated by the totality of the infant's dependence. The older child is loved more for what he already is and what he is becoming, while the baby is loved not only for himself but for the charm of his helplessness.

Early placements are not contrary to the acquisition of a thoroughgoing estimate and understanding of the child's potentialities, although formerly it was erroneously believed by many to be so. With the normal, healthy baby, the delay has usually been brought about by the timing of the first psychological test (or, if more than one is given, by the extended period of time necessary for this). It is precisely this waiting period which has been eliminated in the early placements. For the baby, this means that his first love is more apt to be his permanent one, and that thus his psychological gains are uninterrupted and unimpaired.

There has been a traditional aloofness from early placements so that no stone would be left unturned as far as the knowledge of the child was concerned. No one would want to give up the exploration of hereditary factors or complete and continuous health and psychological examinations. Actually, what happens is the change of the place where these examinations are made from a temporary home to the adoptive one. Experience thus far has demonstrated that much information about the baby and his background can be learned quickly, and that it can be directive. The choice has not seemed to be between more risk or less risk for the baby. He still is selected on the basis of known and favorable hereditary facts, on evidence of an uneventful pregnancy and birth, and finally on the grounds of his beginning health and early normal development. Likewise, his parents are chosen because they are ready to accept parenthood by adoption, are mature and secure and have made a positive adjustment to each other and to living. They are chosen, too, for their readiness and willingness to embark on a project so eventful.

Tentative Analysis of Early Placements

From January, 1945, to May 1, 1949, the agency made 488 adoptive placements. In this total are included 97 early placements, or 19% of all children placed during these three and one half years.

FREQUENCY OF EARLY PLACEMENTS

Year	*Infants Placed*	*Total Number of Children Placed*
1945	4	45
1946	7	103
1947	24	146
1948	41	143
1949 (to May 1)	21	51
Totals	97	488

The proportion of early placements has been increasing particularly since January, 1949. This is due generally to the agency's increasing assurance that certain types of infant need placement before the age of three months. It has been due also to a change in the kind of referrals the agency is receiving, and to the fact that with the help of the caseworker, unmarried mothers are able to decide earlier whether to surrender or to keep their babies. In 1945, the majority of children referred for adoption were over two years of age, while at present the majority are under six months of age. This does not mean that older children are excluded from service by the agency—rather that the community sources of referral are requesting service at an earlier date. The sources include private family agencies, shelters for unmarried mothers, hospitals, public agencies, doctors and attorneys.

Actual referral of an unborn infant was unusual a few years ago, although there were inquiries about adoption service for expected infants. At present a number of unmarried mothers are requesting help in planning for the care of the expected baby. By 1947, of the early placements made, 68% had been referred tentatively during the prenatal period. A slight increase is noted in 1948, when 70% were so referred; and the 1949 proportion to May 1 was 86%.

Forty-eight of the babies were males and forty-nine female. Nineteen of the infants were second children placed by the agency; and there were two sets of twins, one set both boys, and one a girl and a boy.

Sixty-two of these babies had been referred in the prenatal period, 35 after birth. The average age at placement for infants referred before birth was nineteen days in 1947, thirty-three days in 1948 and 1949. For those infants referred after birth, the age at placement for 1945 was sixty-one days; in 1946, fifty-one days; in 1947, twenty-three days; in 1948, forty-three days; and in 1949, thirty-nine days.

In the group of 97 there were 16 babies who were not tested. Among those who were tested, 3 were below average, 30 were classified as average, 34 above average, and 14 superior. In motor development, there were 3 below average, 23 average, 40 above average, and 15 in the superior group.

The average ages of adoptive parents were:

Year	*Father*	*Mother*
1945	37	33
1946	39	38
1947	37	34
1948	37	33
1949	34	33

An Evaluation of the Placement

The four early placements made in 1945 appear to have been good ones. Three of the babies, when tested, were average in mental ability and adaptive behavior, and average in motor development. One was above average in both areas. They were physically in good health and their social adjustment was satisfactory. The couples chosen for these babies seem to have had a satisfying experience as parents by adoption. In this group the average wait for the completion of legal adoption was two years and one month.

The same was true of six of the seven young infants placed in 1946. The seventh placement was not successful. The infant was placed at the age of six weeks, and a month later his fontanelles began to close. When a psychological test was done, he showed considerable retardation in all areas. At the age of five months the baby was removed from the adoptive home and was admitted to a hospital. He died at the age of nine months and a tentative diagnosis of microcephalism was made. This was a painful experience for the adoptive parents and for the agency. Another baby, seven months old and already tested, was placed with the same family, who now feel that they have experienced real life problems, and recently applied for a third child.

In reviewing this placement, it became clear that had all the necessary medical information been available, the child would not have been considered for early placement.

As originally pictured, this baby had an excellent heredity and his paternity was known and was positive. According to preliminary reports from the hospital, the mother's pregnancy had been uneventful and his birth normal with a seven-pound weight. His daily progress in the hospital was said to be good. On the day of placement a written report was given to the agency, which bore out the above facts. However, after the baby's hospitalization, a further search by the first hospital revealed that the baby had had a series of x-rays because of suspicion of kyphosis. The suspicion had not been reported because it was considered unimportant, since the pictures were negative. Had it been known that x-rays had been taken and that there was a question of a spinal involvement, this baby would not have been considered for early placement. A careful study by the agency's pediatrician would have been made, and the child would have been placed in a study home for its completion.

This experience stimulated the agency to make eventual specific recommendations relative to the exact kind of medical information that would be required from the hospital about the baby and the mother.

The other six infants for whom early placements were made in 1946 were well placed. In mental ability and adaptive behavior, 67% tested as average, and 33% as above average. In motor development, 33% tested as average and 67% as above average. The six legal adoptions have been completed, with the supervision period averaging one year and four months.

In 1947, all of the 24 placements were satisfactory. However, one infant who tested well had to be removed from the home because the mother refused to proceed with surrender. Until June, 1947, these early placements had been made without a surrender, but with an agreement by the mother that should the baby prove adoptable after testing, she would sign the legal surrender. The consequent experience was painful for all concerned. Adopting parents found it very difficult to accept removal of a baby, even though they were ultimately able to participate in it. This repeated situation led the agency to decide to have surrenders signed before placement, without the psychological test; and since January, 1948, no infant has been placed without a surrender.

Another placement raised a question for the agency which it later resolved.

A baby in this group, who had been placed at the age of twenty-one days, indicated when tested at twelve weeks that, while normal in development, she was in the lower percentile of normalcy. There was an older adopted son in the adoptive family who had a better than average intelligence, as had the family. The results of the test for the little girl were discussed with the family, whose first reaction was that it made no difference because they wanted the child. Discussion brought out the fact that they accepted realistically what might prove ultimately to be more extensive limitations than they were conscious of at the moment. They knew that the little girl might not complete more than the second year of high school successfully. Their decision was that they wished to be her parents, and they felt secure in their ability to handle the situation if there were an evident difference between the two children. This child is still under supervision after twenty-four months, but will be referred to the Court shortly.

The ratings of this group placed in 1947 were generally good. One, as mentioned above, was classified as dull normal. In mental ability and adaptive behavior, 41% tested as average, 46% as above average, and 12% as superior. In motor development, none tested below average, 21% tested average, 58% tested above average and 21% were classified as superior.

The 23 children who remained in the adoptive homes where they were placed have been legally adopted in the majority of cases. In 86% of the cases where legal adoption has been completed, the homes remained under supervision an average of one year and four months. One adoption has just been referred to the Surrogate's Court after a period of eighteen months' supervision.

The 40 placements in 1948 are satisfactory, so far as can be determined, with one exception.

An infant boy was placed at the age of one month. His background was unusually good (in fact, in retrospect, one of the more superior backgrounds among children on referral at the time). This child became ill three months after placement, and an enlarged tongue was noted, as well as a systolic heart murmur. The pediatrician who was retained by the family stated that "the general condition of the body of the infant is not what it ought to be" and recommended "a thorough workup to exclude the possibility of cretinism." The baby was removed from the home four months after his placement. He has had two hospitalizations, and the medical findings reveal that he shows signs of cretinism, although a definite diagnosis has not been reached.

Several pediatricians, including the one retained by the adoptive family, have agreed that there was nothing in the background history, the birth history, or the early development of the baby which would have warned of the difficulty. This opinion is somewhat confirmed by the fact that a definite medical diagnosis cannot yet be reached. The child has not yet been given a psychological test.

The removal of the baby from the adoptive home, while difficult for the parents, was accepted by them, and they co-operated well in the transfer of the baby. They inquired for him several times, but have taken an older infant who had been tested and observed in a study home. In this difficult situation the family could quickly and readily accept the decision of the agency to remove the baby, although they expressed a desire to keep him.

The classification of the remaining 40 children placed in 1948 is as follows: in the dull normal or below-average group there were 5%; in the average classification, 25%; above average, 53%; superior, 17%. In motor development, the below average comprised 3%, average 33%, above average 47%, and superior 17%. Five legal adoptions have been completed from this group, and 35 children are under supervision.

The placements of the 21 children in 1949 seem satisfactory. However, it is noted that for many of them, gross irregularities alone would be evident so far. Only 6 of the total number have been tested. In mental and adaptive behavior, 2 have tested as average, 1 above average, and 3 superior. In motor development, 1 has tested as average, 2 above average, and 3 superior.

The presentation of these comparative percentages of measurable achievements such as psychological tests of babies is not to be construed as preoccupation with objective factors. Most important of all considerations are the social and moral gains for each child placed now and in the future. The fact that these infants remained in the homes where they were placed, after a minimum of a year's supervision, is testimony to the satisfaction the agency feels in its choices.

There is careful and purposeful pre-placement planning for each individual child. This planning includes in its consideration not only the home which is finally selected, but others which seem possibly suitable. After the pool of homes for each child has been thoroughly considered and discussed by the homefinder who knows the couples, by the worker who knows the child, and by their respective supervisors, the home which is best suited to the child's needs is agreed upon for use. One of the most interesting aspects of the success of these choices is found in good parent-child relationships in the home, and the evident matching of the child's background in nationality and coloring. Each record contained pictures of the family group at the time of referral to the Court for adoption and these graphically illustrated many likenesses.

The incidence of unsuccessful early placement of infants by the agency is 1 in every 97 children. This means that for each placement that is not satisfactory, 96 young babies have the advantage of achieving permanent homes in the early weeks of their lives.

After reconsideration and careful review of every factor involved in the unsatisfactory placements, it seems that one placement would not have been made had adequate information been made available; in another, proper surrender safeguards would have eliminated an unsatisfactory situation. In the former case, the sharing of known facts about the infant by a hospital would have pointed out the unsuitability of early placement. The more concise request for medical information which is now made lessens the possibility of another such situation.

In the second case the placement was a good one but when the mother did not surrender, the weakness of this plan was noted and the procedure eventually was changed. There were two reasons for the change

—the greater security of the placement and the benefit to the child's mother. When she has made her decision it is difficult not to go through with the surrender quickly. The delay leaves time for the mother to renew her conflicts. At present a mother who wishes to test her feelings about separation from her baby is offered the services of a study home where she may visit him.

In the third instance, it appears, at present, that there is no explanation for the physical condition of the infant. No omission or error has been found to account for the fact that the boy's condition was not anticipated. It may be possible ultimately to find some tangible factor that was missed; or this may be the kind of placement that must sometimes be faced and borne for the greater good of many babies.

Eligibility of Infants for Early Placement

At this time the criteria for consideration of an infant for early placement begin with the mother. These placements are not generally considered unless the mother has had casework service before the birth of her baby. The mothers who have had this help during the prenatal period are apparently better able to make early decisions than those who have not had help until after the baby is born. The most effective casework service is directed toward helping the mother resolve her conflicts, and thus ultimately enabling her to plan constructively for her baby. The mother's background, social, mental and physical, as well as the father's or alleged father's, must be known in detail. When the agency has question as to the paternity, it places the baby in a study home. A complete prenatal, natal and general medical history of the mother must be available. Her willingness to make it possible to obtain these facts is a test of her real desire to have the agency move ahead in its planning with her. There should be available a general physical and mental health history of the father; and the mother's willingness to help in this area does point to the conviction of her desire.

The facts of the health of the baby that are minimal include his condition at birth, birth weight, length at birth, head measurement, chest measurement, condition of the fontanelles, feeding, Wasserman, operations, weight on discharge and results of the discharge examination.

The agency must have a satisfactory surrender available from the mother, either drawn by and signed in the presence of the agency attorney, or taken by another agency which has been reviewed and approved by the agency's attorney.

Before a surrender is taken as early as this, it is required that the mother have seen her baby at least once, and it is preferable that she have cared for him at least part of the time.

Eligibility of Adoptive Parents in Early Placements

The requirements for adoptive parents are of course, in broad terms, that they can fulfill the child's right to have an emotionally secure home. Practical considerations are given by this agency to the Catholicity of the home, in order to have the child reared in a good moral atmosphere and in a home of the religious faith of his parents. Finances are scrutinized to assure a reasonably good standard of living. The possession of good health by both adoptive parents is important to the child's welfare. The reasons for childlessness and the motivations for wanting adoption are no small part of the exploration of the couple's ability to assume parenthood by adoption. Prerequisite to determining their acceptability is a clear understanding of their relationship to each other and to other people. It is important to know what their own families meant to them and what their present family contacts are. For the placement of a young infant it is a hopeful sign when a couple early demonstrate their desire to be parents to a baby, without the anxiety that is present when a baby is wanted to meet their own personal needs. When an agency finds such positives demonstrated, and a clear wish by the couple to share their love with a child, there is reasonable assurance that the couple will enjoy parenthood and have a home to which the agency may entrust an infant. When a very young infant is to be considered, the ability which the couple have demonstrated in times of crises in the past should be a known quality, since it is always important to keep in mind the possibility that the baby may need to be moved. The reaction of the couple to the suggestion of such a possibility is indicative of their usability for early placement. The total program of the agency is discussed with couples who are selected for home studies, but, obviously, not all couples who request it are considered for this plan.

Tentative General Conclusions

The general status of the total group of 97 early placements is satisfactory in terms of results. The general physical condition of the children was essentially superior. The parents chosen for them were proper choices insofar as this can be determined. There were a few situations in which the supervisory period was longer than the average. Whenever there was question in one area or another, supervision was extended until the agency was satisfied that the child was well placed. The value to the baby has appeared

as the most important result of early placement. The general tone of psychological and physical accomplishment of these babies in composite is more than satisfying.

In the placing of children, an adoption staff is the agency's best critic. The staff in the Adoption Department of the Catholic Home Bureau agree that the program should continue. The unsuccessful placements thus far have not been out of proportion to the number of placements, and of course every safeguard will be set up to reduce the proportion. These instances have not discouraged unreasonably those actually placing infants, but have, rather, been an incentive to a constant refinement of service.

It is agreed, tentatively, that the plan of early placement is a good one for some infants, but that not every baby may be considered for the plan. It is true, likewise, that not every couple who apply would meet the needs of a young infant, nor be able to carry the emotional risks involved. Hence the program will continue to be selective, and will continue for some years to be under careful scrutiny.

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BOOK NOTES

CHILD OFFENDERS, A STUDY IN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT. By Harriet Labe Goldberg. Grune & Stratton. N. Y. 1948. 215 pp.

Dr. Goldberg's study of child offenders who appear in a children's court is limited to her experience in the New York City area. It represents a pattern for the rest of the nation, though one might ask whether she might not have used material from the usual sources in the literature of psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists and others who are engaged in the general study of child delinquents elsewhere. The plan is well formulated and the material is offered in logical, clear style. It should be very useful to court workers and attendance officers in schools, though it offers very little discussion of deeper implications which might challenge the attention and respect of psychiatrists and allied workers who are trained in psychoanalytic approaches.

The chapters are logically developed and include comprehensively all the major influences which bear on childhood offenses. Fortunately, Chapter 1 is spent in a sensible discussion of "Motivation" as the central factor in misbehavior. Most of the difficult children appeared in court because of truancy or misconduct in school, though the cases always highlighted family discord and accompanying symptoms of mental conflict which impress one with the realization that truancy or classroom misconduct is only a presenting facet in mental conflict. The seven chapters are:

Chapter 1: Children in Court
Chapter 2: Mentally Retarded Children
Chapter 3: Emotionally Unstable Children and Those with Neurotic Patterns
Chapter 4: Neurotics and Psychoneurotics
Chapter 5: Psychopathic Personalities and the Mentally Ill
Chapter 6: The Physically Ill and Socially Handicapped
Chapter 7: A Challenge to Community Organization

The last chapter offers a full review of the problem as it affects the community. Emphasis is largely on the child guidance approach, with critical references to the lack of facilities which exist even in the nation's largest community. One may get the misimpression that "thorough medical and psychiatric study" offers the most important step in diagnosis and planning. The cases described often bear out the common experience that a good casework approach reveals as much as a limited psychiatric and medical evaluation. The diagnostic categories are sometimes hazily defined. The diagnosis "Psychopathic Personality" might better have been termed "Neurotic Character Disorders" in many cases. Differentiation between mental illness and psychopathic personality seems at times difficult to understand. In other instances, severely disturbed parents are thought to be the basic influences on children whose behavior is obviously psychopathic, whereas no effort is made to explain how it happens that some children whose behavior is just as conflicted appear to get along anyway with the limited facilities available. The arbitrary conclusion reached in such instances is that the child happens to be basically stable. Successes, then, are *ipso facto* determined to occur because of a basic stability. There appears to be too little reference to a dynamic approach to explanation of treatment below the more superficial levels of consciousness.

There is proof of Miss Goldberg's experience and wisdom in the handling of these problems, as brought out in the last chapter. Here she emphasizes the fundamental need for the development of adequate personnel in fields allied to education and psychiatry. She cautiously and effectively explains how a judge properly oriented in psychodynamics will be better able to make use of contributions from the social worker and the psychiatrist. She ably defends the judge in his responsibility as the authority who must make the final decision and take responsibility for it. There is the usual reference to deeper causes, with special attention to the absence of healthy family life in most of the cases described. She makes the point that the stigma and cost of court study can be avoided through developing the school system as the best setting for the study of these simple delinquencies.

Workers in the field of delinquency will find advantage in studying Miss Goldberg's logical presentation of this important subject. Her ideals may be difficult to reach, even as they have been in her experience, but they are realistically described and are modest goals even within the framework of existing limitations of personnel and placement facilities.

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THE SELECTION AND ADMISSION OF STUDENTS IN A SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, by Margaret E. Bishop. University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. 1948. 58 pp.

This publication is an important contribution to the clarification of a problem that is of increasing concern to schools of social work—and to the field, which for a long time has raised questions about the basis of selection of students.

Miss Bishop, who is Director of Admissions and Placement of the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, explains that her purpose in writing about the application process

"is to examine that process as it operates within the administrative structure with its base in admissions requirements and established procedures and as it eventuates in the admission of students with a sound relationship to the school, to the training experience which it offers, and ultimately to the profession."

To this end Miss Bishop describes the administrative structure and the dynamic movement of applications within this framework. She considers the process from the beginning point of inquiry to the school for information, through the steps of the submission of application, the gathering of reference material by the school, the personal interview, and, finally, the action of the Admissions Committee upon the application. Attention is given to the difference in problems presented by the young, inexperienced applicant and the older, experienced person.

There have been many discussions about the "screening process," with general agreement that objective material is not a sufficient base on which to grant admission to a school of social work, and that it is important to have knowledge of the more subjective, intangible qualities of our applicants. Consideration has been given in various schools to the use of personality tests and interviews with psychiatrists, and there has seemed to be a notable lack of conviction in our own ways of knowing people. Miss Bishop has tackled this problem. She has formulated a series of important and meaningful questions to guide her in the evaluation of interviews and written material. An application process has been developed which tends to produce answers to these questions. Miss Bishop writes:

"While an applicant is held to and judged by his use of structure, the school is even more responsible for abiding by and using vitally what it has created and set up."

The social work practitioner who has seen the client begin to know what taking help may be like in terms of agency structure will quickly see how an applicant to a school of social work may begin to experience what professional education may be like. The application process, therefore, truly means that the applicant as well as the school has an opportunity to make a decision. The illustrative case material, recorded in process form, is evidence of the vital and sensitive way in which structure is used.

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The Pleasantville Cottage School, an institution of the Jewish Child Care Association of New York, has prepared a *Manual for Cottage Parents* which should be of great interest and value to other institutions as a guide in compiling or revising manuals for their cottage or group supervisors.

Of special significance is the delineation of the key function of the cottage parent, that of working creatively with the children as a social group who are bound together by the living situation itself—eating, sleeping, working, and playing together. There are many opportunities for educational experiences in the cottage group situation which the cottage parent can utilize. Cottage parents can encourage self-government and co-operative living, and can create opportunities for the development of leadership qualities.

Part I of the Pleasantville *Manual* describes the institution, and the other services and departments of the entire Association. There are chapters on the "Philosophy and Objectives of the Institution as a Whole," "The Cottage," "The Functions of the Cottage Mother and Her Associates," "The Functions of the Relief Cottage Parent." One of the most important chapters deals with "Departments with which the Work of the Cottage Parent is Co-ordinated." There are also chapters on personnel practices pertaining to cottage parents, "Facilities for Cottage Parents," and "Supervision."

Part II of the *Manual* is especially valuable, since it deals with most of the specific details or "mechanics," which, if not made clear, can account for much dissatisfaction and poor morale. Rules and regulations are described—such as the hour of rising, time due in at night, lights out, smoking, special activities. Chapter II deals with "Procedures in the Steward's Department," covering food, clothing, and laundry. There is hardly anything which can distress cottage parents more than lack of system in regard to requisitioning food, obtaining adequate clothing for their children, and sending the laundry out and getting it back on time and in good condition. Every institution needs clear procedures on these matters; otherwise the cottage parents may become completely bewildered and discouraged by having to spend an undue amount of time on these "mechanics" of the job.

The final chapter deals with miscellaneous but very important matters—incoming and outgoing mail for both children and cottage parents, telephone service, cottage fun and parties, preparing the daily census, what to do when a child runs away, inspecting the children at bathing time, children's allowances and other money, visiting regulations for parents and alumni, and furniture for cottage parents.

This *Manual* is about 30 pages long, in combined narrative and outline form. Cottage parents should derive a good sense of security in having it on hand for ready reference when he or she undertakes the position.

The *Manual* was written by David Hallowitz, Acting Assistant Director of Pleasantville Cottage School, with the assistance of Jacob Hechler, Director of the School. Louis H. Sobel, Director of the Jewish Child Care Association of New York, has written a foreword.

The Pleasantville Cottage School has, as a service to other institutions, mimeographed additional copies for sale at a nominal cost of fifty cents each. Orders may be placed through the League.

JOHN E. DULA

Consultant, Child Welfare League of America

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